

Random Encounters

Denizens of Stone Bog

By Skip Williams



Green Death

Not far from the watery lair of the mummies stands the remnants of a shattered guard tower whose weed-choked moat has overflowed over the surrounding area for several hundred yards in every direction. The moat itself is about 12 feet deep, but the surrounding wetland is barely ankle deep.

The green dragon Wrinestii makes her lair in the tower. She usually comes and goes through a hole in the battlements, but there also is a crack in the foundation that gives access to the moat, and Wrinestii can wiggle through that if she likes. The tower's gutted interior consists of a single, high chamber, with a ceiling mostly intact except for Wrinestii's exit hole. Piles of



masonry debris litter the floor. The dragon has dug out a shallow bowl to contain her treasure (and serve as her bed). A sinkhole leading to the tower's flooded dungeons (with their connection to the moat) completes the scene.

Wrinestii is the sole survivor of a green dragon family wiped out by elves. Though exceptionally vigorous and agile for a member of her species, Wrinestii's wits were always a tad slow, much to the delight of her nestmates (who teased her unceasingly) and the despair of her parents. When the elves discovered and attacked the family lair, Wrinestii fled at the first sign of danger. Later, she returned to the scene, where she ambushed a few elves left to guard the lair and steal a portion of her family's treasure. Though pleased with herself for surviving her family's demise, she remains resentful of all elves and very sensitive about her mental prowess and personal courage. She's a bully and a coward through and through, but she resents anyone saying so.

Wrinestii considers herself the undisputed ruler of Stone Bog, and the other residents are mostly content to let her think so. She aggressively defends her tower and the whole of Stone Bog if she becomes aware of intruders in the area. Whenever possible, Wrinestii meets her foes outside her lair. She prefers to open a battle using Flyby Attack and her breath weapon, then she vanishes behind the trees or underwater, where she casts *shield* on herself and waits until she can breathe again, whereupon she returns for another Flyby breath attack. After that, she casts *true strike*, then flies in for a diving attack on the enemy's most imposing fighter. She uses her Power Attack feat to turn all her base attack bonus (+14) into a damage bonus. After delivering this (she hopes) devastating attack, she demands that her foes surrender.

Should her foes actually surrender, Wrinestii is pleasantly surprised, and she quickly demands that they place all their weapons, magic, and money in a pile. (She uses her *detect magic* spell to make sure nobody withholds any magic.) Once that's done, she flies off with as much loot as she can carry, laughing like a maniac. Foes who have surrendered would do well to quit the area while the dragon is gone, because it eventually will occur to Wrinestii that anyone who escapes the fight will return to attack her another day.

Should Wrinestii's foes choose to fight on after her demand for surrender, the dragon fights on the ground for a round or two, just long enough to get in one or two full attacks. She uses her breath weapon whenever it becomes available, blanketing the opposition from aloft. During a long battle, she may retreat once or twice to repeat her *true strike* and Power Attack tactic, especially if she has to wait a long time between breaths. She intends to fight to the death, but if reduced to 15 hit points or less, she flees the bog, returning only after she has regained all her lost hit points and spells. If she finds her lair looted when she gets back, she'll be in a dark mood indeed, but sets out to rebuild her hoard as best she can.

If unable to flee a battle that has turned against her, Wrinestii might be persuaded to surrender herself (this requires a successful Diplomacy or Intimidate check, with at least a +10 to Wrinestii's Sense Motive check). Groups who capture Wrinestii would do well to seize a portion of the defeated dragon's hoard and leave. Anyone who tries to take Wrinestii prisoner mostly likely will have to fight her again someday. Wrinestii is a coward, but she remains on the lookout for any opportunity to slay her captors and escape.

Wrinestii: Female juvenile green dragon; CR 7; Large dragon (air); HD 14d12+42; hp 133; Init +0; Spd 40 ft., swim 40 ft., fly 150 ft. (poor); AC 24, touch 11, flat-footed 24; Atk +17 melee (2d6+4, bite) and +15

melee (1d8+2, 2 claws) and +15 melee (1d6+2, 2 wings) and +15 melee (1d8+6, tail slap); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 10 ft./10 ft.; SA breath weapon (40-foot cone of acid), spells; SQ blindsight 120 ft., darkvision 400 ft., immunities (acid, paralysis, *sleep*), low-light vision, water breathing; AL LE; SV Fort +12, Ref +9, Will +11; Str 19, Dex 10, Con 17, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +15, Climb +11, Concentration +16, Diplomacy +4, Hide -1, Intimidate +16, Listen +15, Move Silently +15, Search +15, Spot +15, Swim +12; Flyby Attack, Multiattack, Power Attack, Wingover.

Breath Weapon (Su): Once every 1d4 rounds, Wrinstii can breathe a 40-ft. cone of acid. Anyone caught in the area takes 8d6 points of acid damage (Reflex DC 20 half).

Spells: Wrinstii can cast spells as a 1st-level sorcerer.

Blindsight (Ex): Wrinstii can ascertain creatures by nonvisual means (mostly hearing and scent, but also by noticing vibration and other environmental clues to a range of 120 feet.

Low-Light Vision: Wrinstii can see four times as well as a human in low-light conditions and twice as well in normal light.

Water Breathing (Ex): Wrinstii can breathe underwater indefinitely and can freely use her breath weapon, spells, and other abilities while submerged.

Sorcerer Spells Known (5/4; save DC 12 + spell level): 0 -- *dancing lights, detect magic, disrupt undead, mage hand*; 1st -- *shield, true strike*.

Possessions: +2 ring of protection.

Bringing the Parts Together

Wrinstii makes regular trips around Stone Bog to keep her eye on things, but she seldom strays far from her tower lair. Her attempts to establish herself as queen of the bog have met only mixed results. Of all the denizens of the bog, only the gargoyles (see *The Gargoyles of Stone Bog*, part 1) pay her much attention. They resent her attempts to command them, but reluctantly do her bidding when they cannot evade her. Still, the gargoyles are quick to report any incursions into the bog to Wrinstii, especially if a party has defeated them in combat.

The ghouls in the dell (see *Beware the Ghouls*, part 2) would love to sink their teeth and claws into the dragon's flesh (a testament to how hungry they have become). They usually hide when the dragon flies overhead, and they allow the dragon to carry off any baubles left behind when the ghouls slay visitors to the dell.

The mummies ignore the dragon, and for the most part she ignores them. Still, if Wrinstii is at home when a battle occurs near the mummies' lair, the dragon is likely to hear the ruckus and come to investigate. She usually waits until any battle with the mummies is over before joining the fray herself, though she may intervene if a party drives all the mummies back into the water through undead turning. Should the turned mummies reappear, Wrinstii withdraws to recharge her breath weapon or cast a *true strike* spell (or both), and returns when the mummies have been defeated or driven off again.

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